

Santa Barbara City Council Subcommittee on Homelessness and Community Relations  
August 6, 2008  
4 – 6 p.m.

Louise Lowry Davis Center  
1232 De la Vina Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
Minutes

**Topic - Need for increased coordination between City Police and homeless street outreach staff from various agencies to reduce calls for service to City Police**

Council Members Present: Iya Falcone, Dale Francisco, Helene Schneider

Staff Present: Frank Mannix, Sue Gray, Rich Glaus, Liz Stotts, Steve Wiley,

**1. ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT STREET OUTREACH TEAMS**

Roger Heroux presented information regarding current organizations providing street outreach. A summary and schedule were handed out. He indicated that most of the non-profits listed are not funded by government and services could change depending upon funding levels.

**2. CURRENT POLICE DEPARTMENT COORDINATION REGARDING HOMELESS OUTREACH**

Captain Frank Mannix reported on street outreach provided by the Santa Barbara Police Department. He indicated that police officers are often the first point of contact with individuals needing services because they are out on the streets 24 hours per day 7 days per week. He reported that all officers are provided 6 hours of training on dealing with persons with disabilities, including mental illness. After this, all Field Training Officers are provided 4 months of hands on training with an experienced officer. The department has a 6 member Tactical Patrol Team who receive crisis intervention training consisting of 32 hours training by a mental health worker on topics such as recognizing mental illness, proper handling of individuals experiencing a mental illness episode and resources available. Twenty officers have received this training so far. The department also operates the successful Restorative Policing Unit, which is a collaboration between regional law enforcement and mental health service providers to deal with the most chronic homeless individuals. The team operates with a “never give up” attitude and they contact individuals on their caseload daily until they receive services and are off the street.

**3. CURRENT COORDINATION/COMMUNICATION AMONG OUTREACH PROVIDERS**

Roger Heroux reported that the street outreach workers have had periodic meetings to talk about what they do, how they do it and how to work more effectively together. He said that they are interested in working together and hopes this process can foster that effort. He praised the Restorative Policing Program and said that those officers act like social workers. He said that trust level between homeless individuals, service providers and the police is the key factor to successfully getting people off the streets.

Many of the outreach workers meet weekly at Cottage Hospital to discuss patients being discharged. The purpose is to develop a discharge plan to ensure that they are not discharged to the street.

#### 4. OVERVIEW OF BEST PRACTICES

Roger Heroux talked about street outreach programs in Cincinnati, OH and Pittsburgh, PA. Both cities have comprehensive programs. Cincinnati has 24/7 outreach teams and all homeless individuals are regularly contacted by outreach workers, consisting of teams of two. This program is funded by the City and it is expensive. The team contacts mental health workers when mental illness is suspected. Teams also work with the jails and hospitals to help with discharge planning. They have also mapped out camps and other congregation areas so they know where people are located. The City of Pittsburgh has reduced chronic homelessness by 600 in the last 4 years. They move people from contact with outreach teams to services to supportive housing.

#### 5. RECOMMENDATION THAT OUTREACH TEAMS, POLICE AND FIRE MEET TO DEVELOP A STRUCTURE FOR INCREASED COORDINATION ADDRESSING THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

Several comments were made including: the need for more coordination between street outreach workers and police, fire and park rangers; compassion makes outreach successful; housing rather than treating people on the street reduces the cost by 50%; the amount spent on “treating” homelessness (i.e. \$10 million by four departments in the County and \$6 million by Santa Barbara Police Department); a question of Santa Barbara’s caring capacity (i.e. how much capacity do we have for housing, affordable housing and homeless services); and the importance involving homeless persons in street outreach efforts because they know what goes on in the “trenches”.

The following topics will be discussed in coordination meetings including street outreach teams, police department, fire department and park rangers:

- Ongoing Education of Police Officers/Firefighters/Paramedics
- Possible Expansion of Restorative Policing
- Coordination with Street Outreach Workers Prior to Camp Clean Ups
- Increased Coordination and Open Communication Among Outreach Teams
- Strategies to Develop Consistent Open Communication Between Street Outreach Workers and Police
- Publish Outreach Worker Schedules and Contact Numbers (for other Outreach Workers, Police, Fire, Businesses)
- Contingency Plan for Emergencies, including Natural Disasters and Inclement Weather
- Coordinated Plan Development for Chronic Homeless Individuals
- Ongoing Training for Outreach Teams
- Outreach at Food Sites (i.e. Alameda Park).
- Discharge Planning at Hospitals and Jail (discharge to locations – halfway houses, sober center, etc)
- Utilization of Homeless Persons for Street Outreach
- Police Department Should Not be First Contact (we should be more proactive and less reactive)

- Need for Contact for Police when Homeless Person is Encountered
- More Coordination with Camp Clean Ups (don't just move people around/use them as opportunities for outreach)
- Develop Structure for Contacts/Coordination
- Shared Database (legalities)
- 10-Year Plan Staff to Coordinate Outreach (funding)
- 24/7 Coverage – Funding Issues (sources/timelines/sustainable funding sources)
- Coordinated Training for all Outreach Workers
- Downtown Corridor Schedule for Outreach (including P.D.)
- Lower Milpas/East Beach Schedule for Outreach (including P.D.)
- Outcome Data for all Outreach Teams
- Build Programs Around Individuals

The coordination group will report back to the subcommittee with suggestions for improved coordination.

#### 6. SET DATE/TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Friday, August 29<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. at Louise Lowry Davis Center. The topic will be Establishment of a Recovery Zone or Alcohol Impact Zone in Lower Milpas Street Area.

The meeting regarding Aggressive Panhandling will be held on Thursday, September 11<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. at the Louise Lowry Davis Center.

#### 7. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

#### 8. ATTENDEES

Roger Heroux, Bringing Our Community Home  
 Gary Mueller, South Coast Housing Action Committee  
 Linda Miller, Homes on Wheels  
 Imelda Loza, Casa Esperanza  
 John Blomstrand, Fess Parker's DoubleTree  
 Billy Girdas  
 Jim Bryden, Santa Barbara Fire  
 Dave Lombardi, Fast Frame/Downtown Organization  
 Ruth Rodko, Homeless  
 Nancy Kapp, New Beginnings  
 Catherine Ruccino, Santa Barbara Conference & Visitors Bureau  
 Christy White, Homeless  
 Jill Wallerstedt, St. Brigid Fellowship, New Beginnings

Louis Becerril, Santa Barbara City College  
 John Buttny, 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness  
 Joyce Kaiserlian, 20 years homeless  
 Bill Collyer, Downtown Organization  
 Emily Roessler, Noah's Anchorage, Support and Outreach  
 Teri Bradford Rose, YMCA Channel Islands  
 Daniel Knapp, homeless  
 Jennifer Ferraez, ADMHS Homeless Outreach  
 Norma Kutzer  
 Kate Schwab, Downtown Organization  
 John Dixon, Tri-County Produce  
 Karin Quimby, Supervisor Wolf's Office  
 Helen Wong, S.B. County Public Health  
 Sebastian Albana, Franklin Advisory Center  
 Isabel Blagborne, Council on Alcoholism  
 Sue Adams, Casa Esperanza  
 Mike Jordan, GSBLRA  
 Gary Linker, New Beginnings  
 Don Levasheff, Santa Barbara Fire Dept.